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ABSTRACT

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the individualized writing laboratory program at Solano Community College, comparisons were made in fall 1983 among students enrolled in the Writing Skills Laboratory (WSL), students enrolled in English Fundamentals (EF), and students concurrently enrolled in both WSL and EF (WSL+EF). Within each of the three categories, students were further grouped according to their scores on reading and written English expression tests. Comparisons were based on writing assignments completed at the beginning and end of the term and retention rates. Study findings included the following: (1) EF classes had an overall retention rate of 72%; the WSL had an overall retention rate of 71%; and the retention rate for students concurrently enrolled in WSL+EF was 98%; (2) 58% of the WSL students and 61% of the WSL+EF group were in the highest risk categories based on their test scores; (3) of the WSL+EF students who persisted, 73% received credit in the WSL and 55% received a grade of C or better in EF; while 53% of those who enrolled in EF only received a grade of C or better; (4) on writing samples, WSL and WSL+EF students produced the highest rate of improvement in writing skills; and (5) students' scores on the reading test were found to be good indicators of success or failure in composition classes when considered in conjunction with scores on the writing test. The study report includes conclusions and recommendations; information on the holistic criteria used in rating student writing samples; and samples of student papers corresponding to each grading level. (LAL)

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EVALUATION OF THE SOLANO COLLEGE WRITING SKILLS LABORATORY

This report was written at the request
of the California Community College Fund for
Instructional Improvement
Clarence W. Mangham, State Administrator
Innovative Programs

by

Meredith A. Wilson
Project Director
Solano Community College
English Department
Writing Skills Laboratory

May 24, 1984

JC 850 068

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SOLANO COMMUNITY COLLEGE

May 24, 1984

Dr. Clarence Mangham, State Administrator
California Community Colleges
Fund for Instructional Improvement
1107 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Dr. Mangham:

Enclosed you will find the final report on the Evaluation of Solano Community College's Writing Skills Laboratory.

We will be happy to make copies of this report and the holistic reading criteria we developed available to any colleges or interested parties who may request it. Please address all requests to Dr. Donald Kirkorian, Learning Resources, Solano Community College.

We are grateful for the opportunity afforded by the Fund for Instructional Improvement to establish a method of evaluating the effectiveness of our Writing Skills Laboratory and of continuing to improve and expand our materials and services to our students. We sincerely hope that our results will encourage others to establish such programs or to modify existing ones.

Sincerely,

Meredith A. Wilson

Meredith A. Wilson
Project Director
Writing Skills Laboratory

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SOLANO COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
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SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

In 1975 the English Department at Solano Community College began testing students who enrolled in composition classes. We discovered that 53 percent of our students required remediation in basic composition skills to prepare them for college level composition classes. By 1982-83, nearly 70 percent of our incoming students scored below college level in both reading and writing skills on the normed College Board Comparative Guidance and Placement Assessment Tests (CGP). Further, almost 20 percent of these skill-deficient students scored below high school level. The CGP scores also indicated that the number of Solano College students needing remediation in writing skills was 9.5 percent greater than the national average.

In an attempt to meet our students' increased need for remediation in basic skills, we opened a Writing Skills Laboratory (WSL) in Spring 1982 and have been expanding and improving it ever since. To determine the success of the laboratory program and as part of a plan to develop a curriculum for the Writing Skills Laboratory that will include writing across the disciplines, we needed to thoroughly and formally evaluate the progress of students in the WSL. We applied for and were awarded a Community College Fund for Instructional Improvement (CCFFII) Grant for 1983-84 to accomplish the evaluation process.

Purpose of the Report

In keeping with our original proposal and the purpose of the CCFFII program, we wish to share the findings and results of the evaluation project with each Division at Solano Community College, the area high schools, interested community members, and other institutions that may request it.

It is hoped that results of this study will encourage students to enroll in reading and composition courses early in their college careers in order to improve their basic skills and prepare themselves for other content-area courses.

Project Outline

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the individualized laboratory program, comparisons were made in Fall 1983 among students enrolled in the WSL, students enrolled in English Fundamentals (EF), and students concurrently enrolled in both WSL and EF (WSL+EF).

Within each of the three categories, students were further grouped according to their scores on the CGP Reading Program Test and Written English Expression Placement Test. These tests place students in one of three skill levels in each of two categories: reading and writing. Scores in each section of the test place students in one of the following levels of achievement:

Skill Level 1	below high school level
Skill Level 2	high school level
Skill Level 3	beginning college level

No students with a Writing Skill level 3 were used in this study because both WSL and EF are developmental courses designed to prepare students for college level composition courses.

For purposes of this evaluation, students were divided into the following subgroups based on their assessment test scores:

R1/W1	Reading Level 1	Writing Level 1	(lowest)
R1/W2	1	2	
R2/W1	2	1	
R2/W2	2	2	(average skills for developmental classes)
R3/W1	3	1	(there were no students in this group)
R3/W2	3	2	(highest skills level used in the study)
UNTESTED	Students who had not taken the CGP tests		

Students whose reading and/or writing skills are below Level 2 have been identified as the highest risk students in college. They are the most likely to drop out of school, to fail classes, and to be placed on academic probation. Further, the untested students in our sample are another very high risk group--those who have previously taken and dropped or failed English Fundamentals, those who have managed to avoid the Assessment Test, or those who have been taking classes for several semesters but have avoided composition courses. Students with reading and writing skills at or above Level 2 are much lower risks in developmental classes such as WSL and EF.

Activities. The first step in our project involved administering, during the first week of classes, a writing assignment to all students enrolled in EF classes (English 300, remedial composition; English 301, remedial level Business English), and to each student who enrolled in the WSL at the time of his enrollment. The papers were divided into the three categories and seven subgroups identified above. A random sample was selected from each category and subgroup.

Before these student papers were read and evaluated, a group of seven readers (five English instructors, two WSL assistants) was

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selected. We worked with a consultant, Dr. Charles Moore, California State University, Sacramento, who trained us in the techniques of holistic reading and evaluation. He also worked with us on establishing criteria for holistic evaluation. [See: Attachment 1] After training and practice sessions, this group of readers read and evaluated the beginning writing samples. All papers were masked and coded so that readers were not aware of the names of the student writers or their skills levels and enrollment patterns.

At the end of the semester (or when a WSL student had completed one-half unit of credit), a writing assignment was again administered to all students in EF and WSL. The papers were divided and grouped, a random sample selected, and the papers read and evaluated in an identical manner by the same group of readers as the first assignment. The results of each evaluation were compared to determine the degree of change within each skill level and category, and the various subgroups and categories were compared to determine the effectiveness of our placement program, the WSL program, and the "isolated" composition courses.

Finally, retention rates were determined and compared to discover what, if any, effect the WSL program had on keeping students in classes and in school. We compared the retention rates among the students in our various categories and subgroups and compared these rates with college-wide retention rates, where available, of students in the same categories and subgroups.

Modifications. Our plans for this evaluation study originally included the development of a computer program for tracking the

students in each skills level and category for an additional semester to determine the retention rate of each group for comparison with college-wide retention rates. However, two situations developed which made this both unnecessary and impossible. First, we learned that a similar program was being developed by the Counselling Division and that our program would be superfluous; secondly, the acquisition of a new computer and the subsequent shift from the old system to the new, with all of its complications and delays, made the program we envisioned impossible for the present. We therefore dropped this portion of the proposal and worked with members of the Counselling Division to incorporate the data we will require in their computer program.

SECTION II

PROJECT FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Retention

Three groups were compared to determine the student retention rates among our study group:

1. First census week enrollemnt in EF
2. Total number of students who enrolled in and received instruction in WSL
3. Students concurrently enrolled in WSL+EF

Because the WSL is an open-entry class, census week enrollment figures could not be used. In EF, students who drop after two or three class meetings and "no shows" have been removed from the rosters by first census week. Therefore, it was deemed equitable not to include "no shows" and students who came into the WSL only long enough to go through the diagnostic process in determining the WSL enrollment. All students who received any instruction in the WSL program, however, were included.

English Fundamentals classes had an overall retention rate of 72 percent; the WSL had an overall retention rate of 71 percent; and the retention rate for all students concurrently enrolled in WSL+EF was 98 percent. Inasmuch as 61 percent of the students concurrently enrolled in WSL+EF were in the highest risk categories, we feel that the additional assistance these students received in the WSL was clearly influential in retaining them in classes. Further, since 87 percent of these high-risk persisters successfully completed (grade

of C or better) one-half or more units of credit in the WSL, and 54 percent of them successfully completed EF, it is clear that the WSL also improved their success rate in the EF classes. This is further supported by the fact that only 29 percent of the high-risk persisters who were enrolled in the EF alone successfully completed the class. Moreover, of the high-risk students, 27 percent who were enrolled in EF completed the class; 50 percent who were enrolled in WSL completed the class; and 71 percent of those who were enrolled in WSL+EF completed both classes. [See: Figure 1]

In order to fully appreciate the significance of these figures, it must be noted that the WSL had an overall enrollment of 58 percent high-risk students, the concurrent WSL+EF enrollment included 61 percent high-risk students, and EF had only 41 percent high-risk enrollment. Thus, WSL and WSL+EF students who were in the highest risk categories were retained in significantly greater percentages than those in EF alone. This is, of course, to be expected since the WSL program is designed to give the individualized instruction that these high-risk students require. Further, according to Counselling Division figures, only 33 percent of the students who score in Level 1 on the Written Expression portion of the CGP successfully complete their classes; the remaining 67 percent fail or withdraw from classes. Of students who score at Level 2, 62 percent successfully complete their classes; 38 percent fail or withdraw. These figures do not include students' Reading Skill Level scores, nor do they include untested students. By comparison, students who scored at Level 1 in Written Expression and enrolled

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in the WSL had a success rate of 58 percent; at Writing Skill Level 2, the success rate in the WSL was 72 percent. Clearly, the students in the WSL program had a higher success and retention rate than the school-wide average.

There are more subtle ways in which the WSL contributes to student retention. One of the functions of the program is to serve the needs of drop-in students who are not enrolled in the program. These are students who are having problems with writing assignments in other content-area courses and who come into the WSL for help. Often these drop-in students are frustrated and apprehensive about their courses because of inadequate basic skills. Not only do many of them stay in their other classes as a result of the help they receive in the WSL, but many of them also realize that they can get help in improving their writing skills and later enroll in the WSL, EF, or both. The WSL is particularly effective because students can enroll at any time during the semester; it provides help when students realize they are in danger of failing other courses and when they most want and need assistance. Additionally, students tell us that they find the individualized WSL program, where they can learn at their own pace, less intimidating than a more formal English class where they feel that they are competing with "better" students. It is not uncommon for these students to comment that they were on the verge of dropping other classes--including EF--but have stayed in them because of the help they received in the WSL.

While it is almost impossible to keep track of the drop-in students or to evaluate their progress, it is increasingly clear each semester that the WSL is providing them with a much needed service and favorably affecting their retention in school.

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Persisters Receiving Credit

Although one measure of the success of any class or program is how many students complete it, it is even more important to determine how many of these persisters improve their skills sufficiently to receive credit for the course. This study indicates that of those who persisted, students enrolled in WSL and those concurrently enrolled in WSL+EF achieved the best results. Of the WSL only students who completed at least one Lab Study Unit (½ credit), 62 percent received credit ("Cr" which is equivalent to a grade of C or better); of concurrently enrolled students (WSL+EF) who persisted, 73 percent received credit in the WSL and 55 percent received a grade of C or better in EF; and of those enrolled in EF only, 53 percent received a grade of C or better. [See: Figure 2]

Once again, to fully appreciate the importance of these figures, it must be pointed out that the WSL had a significantly higher percentage of high-risk students (58 percent) than did EF (41 percent), and that the WSL+EF enrollment included 61 percent high-risk students. Further, because the WSL enrolls as many students as were enrolled in 6.5 sections of EF, these percentages represent a large number of students; the WSL granted credit to as many students as successfully completed eight sections of EF.

Improvement in Writing Skills

Possibly the most rewarding conclusion of this study was the determination that the WSL is contributing significantly to the improvement of student writing skills. The seven evaluators were trained in holistic reading [See: Project Outline] and consisted of WSL instructors and assistants, EF instructors, and the division

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chair. Student papers were rated on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 6 (highest), and any paper that received two scores more than a point apart received a third reading to resolve the disparity. The names were removed from the papers, and the evaluators did not know which were papers from EF, WSL, or WSL+EF students. [See: Attachment I]

The sample student papers were randomly selected from each of the three enrollment categories and further divided and coded for each of the seven assessment test score levels. Our criteria established a holistic score of 4 (sum of all evaluators' scores divided by the number of scores) or more as an indication that a student's writing skills were at high school level or beginning college level.

The results of our evaluation of student writing samples is set forth in the following chart:

	FIRST WRITING SAMPLES		FINAL WRITING SAMPLES	
Score	1-2-3	4-5-6	1-2-3	4-5-6
EF	93%	7%	77%	23%
WSL	96%	4%	79%	21%
WSL+EF	93%	7%	69%	31%

Once again, the results show that, in spite of having a much greater number of students with the lowest basic skills, the WSL and the combination of WSL with EF produced the highest rate of improvement in writing skills. Equally significant is the fact that in EF, 61 percent of the students improved their writing skills by two or more points; in WSL alone, 84 percent of the students improved their writing skills by two or more points; and 85 percent of the students enrolled in WSL+EF improved their writing skills two or more points. While some of these students improved from 1 to 3 and did not

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achieve a level of writing skills sufficient to place them in English 1, College Composition, they still made a significant improvement in their writing skills.

Assessment Test Scores and Student Placement

In the past, students at Solano College have been placed in composition courses based solely on their scores on the Written English Expression Placement Test. Part of this evaluation project was to determine the relationship, if any, between success in composition courses and both reading and writing scores on the assessment test. In general, the higher the reading and writing scores on the CGP test, the greater the percentage of success in EF and WSL. Students who scored at Level 1 in Writing and Level 2 in Reading, however, were 20 percent more successful in composition classes than students who scored at Level 1 on both tests. Students with both reading and writing scores in the mid to upper ranges of Level 1 on both tests were the least successful in composition classes (EF), falling some 25 percent below those who scored at Level 2 in either reading or writing. Students in the lowest ranges of both the reading and writing test scores (10 or less out of 40 in Writing, 14 or less out of 35 in Reading) had an 86 percent failure or drop rate in EF classes.

It seems clear from these comparisons that a student's score on the Reading Assessment Test is a good indicator of success or failure in composition classes when considered in conjunction with his score on the Writing Assessment Test.

SECTION III

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This evaluation project has shown that the WSL is successful. When the program was initiated, it was given a diverse set of goals. The WSL's primary function was to augment the instruction of students with very low skill levels in EF classes. It was also to provide assistance for non-traditional students whose skill levels were so low that the students were not yet prepared to enroll in basic remedial English composition courses. In addition, the WSL was designed to assist some college level composition students who were still not fully prepared for college level work. The WSL is fulfilling these functions. Moreover, the WSL also provides a "drop-in" place for students who discover that they need help in writing papers for any course they may be taking. Beyond these functions, the WSL also offers a refresher course in writing paragraphs and essays for students who have already taken composition courses but need to review. It offers modules in writing research papers, spelling, and critical reading techniques. Individualized modules are often designed "on the spot" to meet the special needs of physically or developmentally handicapped students. Although this study has focused on the WSL's primary function, it has become apparent that the WSL is achieving all of its goals. It is helping to keep some of the highest risk students in school; and more, it is helping those students achieve success in areas of basic educational

importance.

One result of this project was not anticipated but is both important and gratifying. The work with Dr. Charles Moore [See: page 4], who trained the readers in the techniques of holistic reading and evaluation, led to many discussions and a sharing of pedagogical philosophy and its implementation. The result has clearly been to bring a group of seemingly diverse instructors to a much more consistent understanding of the WSL's functions, its goals, and both "what" to teach and "how" to teach it. The new skills and pedagogy have also begun to have an effect on goals and expectations within the English Department and are beginning to influence changes in both EF classes and the new Writing Across the Curriculum [See: concurrent CCFFII grant] materials. Consequently, all of the instructors and assistants in the WSL have found that they are more consistent and confident in working with WSL students, and WSL students have reflected the staff's confidence and consistency in making even greater progress than they did in earlier semesters.

The CCFFII funded Writing Across the Curriculum Project has adapted and used the holistic evaluation techniques and criteria developed in this evaluation study. Instructors in disciplines other than English have attended workshops in holistic reading and have been assisted with adapting their assignments to involve more student writing, better student writing, and holistic evaluation of student writing. There has been a rather marked enthusiasm among instructors involved in the WAC projects when they discover how to use writing as a teaching--not just a testing--technique. This is, in part, accounted for by the fact that holistic reading does not require that these "non-English" instructors identify and tally errors in grammar,

punctuation, and syntax. They are delighted to discover that writing that does not communicate clearly is inevitably "bad" writing, and they do not need to "name-the-error" in grading such papers. [See: Attachment II]

Because the WSL has been open only during the day, it has been able to assist only some 40 percent of the number of students who enroll in EF classes. In view of the findings in this evaluation project, serious consideration is being given to expanding the hours of operation of the WSL. Although it is fiscally impossible to open the WSL in the evening for the present time, other changes in the remedial English program are possible and are now under study. For example, one such proposal would offer special remedial composition classes in a "package" with WSL and Reading Improvement classes. A special WSL+EF+Reading Improvement "package" has been proposed for students for whom English is a second language. Other changes will include revising the raw scores that place students in each Skill Level, using both the reading and writing skill level scores for placement in composition courses, and establishing a test-out program for developmental English courses.

Finally, an informal consideration of student comments and voluntary, anonymous evaluation of the WSL and its staff indicates that students like the WSL program. There has been a 27 percent increase in enrollment (all voluntary) during the current (Spring 1984) semester. Of 40 percent of the students who responded on a voluntary evaluation, 88 percent felt that the WSL had helped them improve their basic skills, would strongly recommend the WSL to their friends, and found the staff to be knowledgeable, helpful, fair, and impartial. Only 43 percent of the students responding had

any kind of negative comments (undirected responses written by students in space provided for "additional comments and suggestions"). The negative comments and suggestions consistently called for more space, more hours of operation, and more staff. Only 2 percent of the negative comments were directed to materials, staff, or the amount of work required.

While physical and fiscal considerations may delay or prevent the implementation of many departmental and student suggestions, the overall result of the evaluation project has been positive. Changes are in process; some changes have already taken place: there is more consistent instruction, and there is a clearly established criteria for evaluating student progress and setting goals. The entire WSL staff, the English Department, instructors in many other disciplines, and the school administration have all expressed an increased awareness of the WSL program and its success. Students have shown their faith in the program through increased enrollment and a much higher drop-in rate. In fact, the numbers have increased so rapidly this semester that a priority system and specific hours for drop-in students had to be established in order to continue to meet the needs of all of the students.

All of those who work in the WSL program and who have been involved in this evaluation project are gratified to see the program growing and to have evidence of its success; but, most of all, they are delighted to see the students improve their writing skills and to see the increased retention rates among the highest risk students, many of whom would have undoubtedly failed or dropped classes and might have withdrawn from school without the support and assistance provided by the Writing Skills Laboratory.

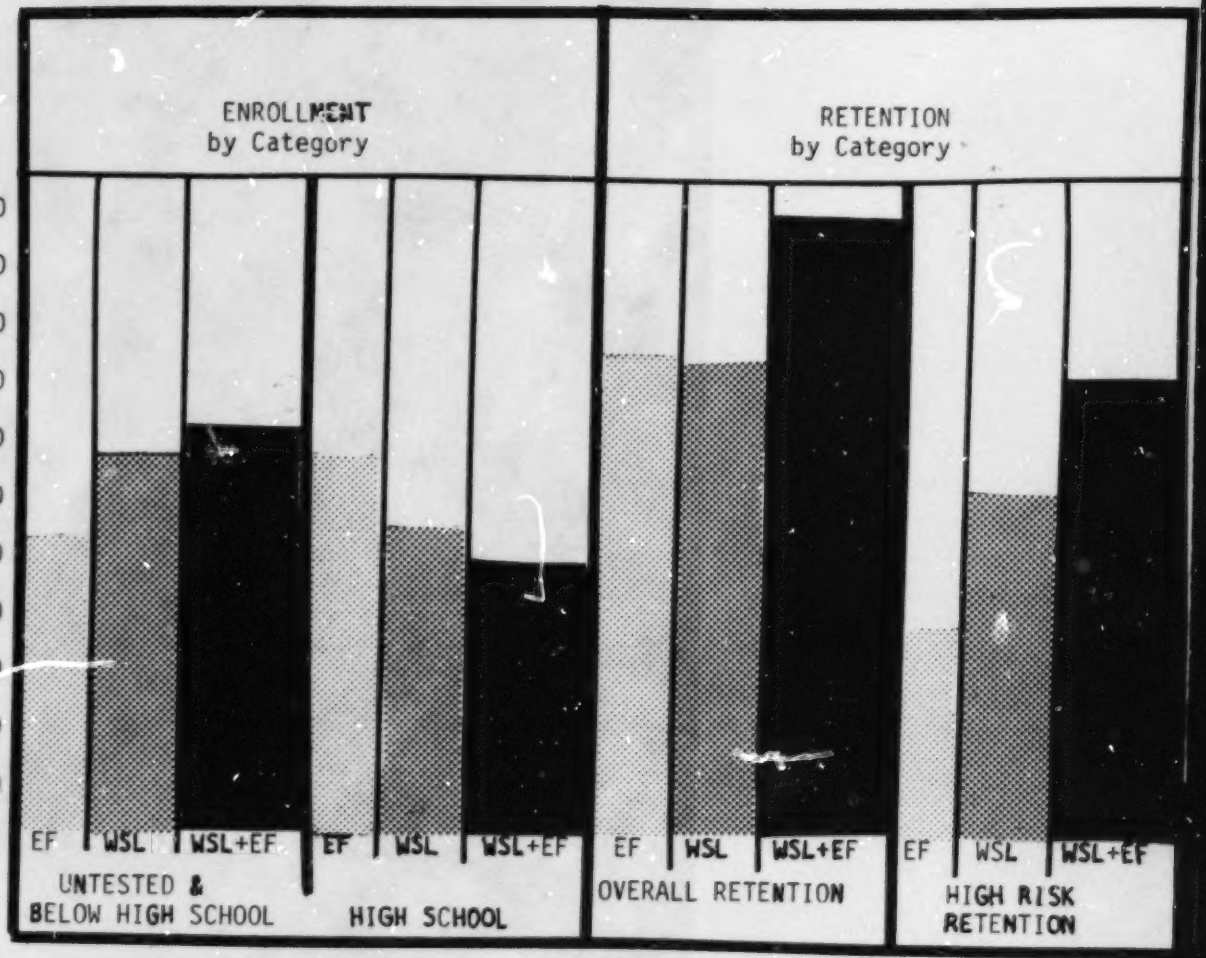
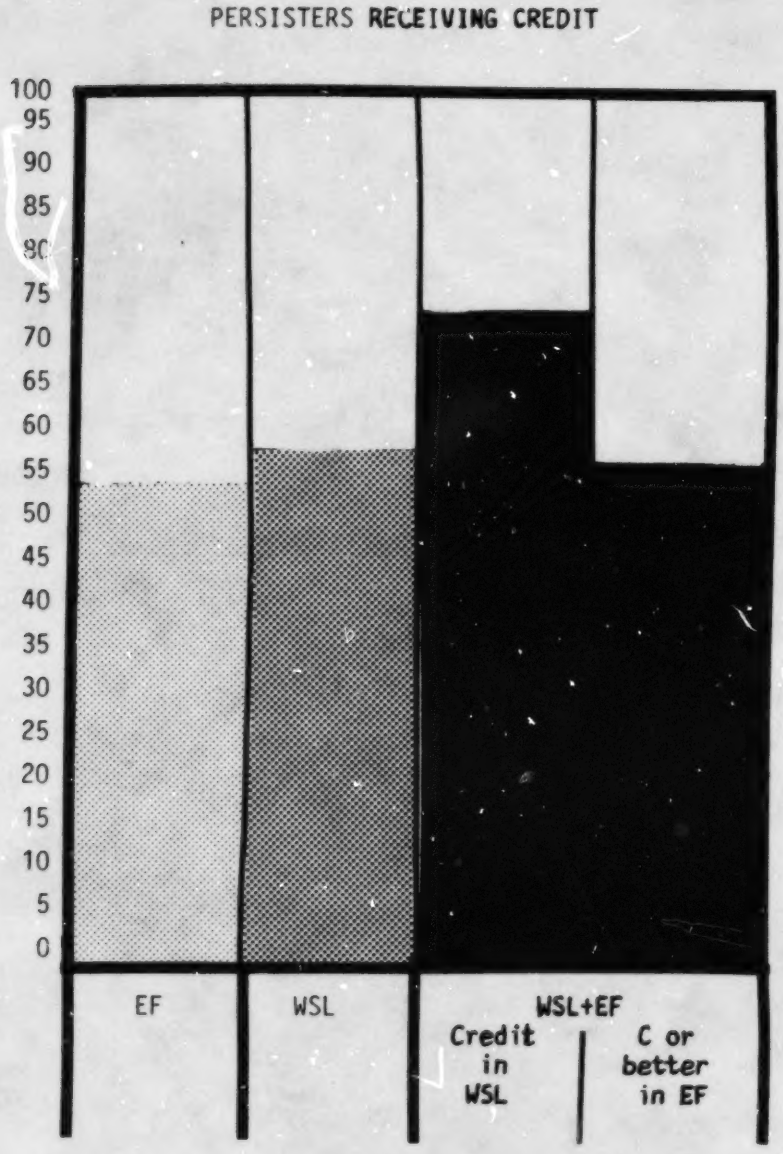


Figure 1

ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION RATES
BY
SKILL LEVELS

Figure 2



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ATTACHMENT I

Typical Characteristics at Each Grading Level

Holistic Criteria

Writing Lab Evaluation

Score	Characteristics
6	An exemplary paper. Organization, style, and content especially effective. Possibly even highly creative. Free of mechanical errors.
5	Solid organization. Proficient language. Ideas very well developed. Virtually free of mechanical errors.
4	Clear overall structure and some development of specific ideas. Answers all parts of the question (assignment). Few mechanical errors. Language facility is adequate (i.e., clarity and meaning are not obscured).
3	Though the paper demonstrates some structure and development, paragraph development generally weak. May demonstrate a lack of facility in language use (confused word choice, inappropriate diction, lack of clarity, etc.)
2	May write off the point or address the point rather obliquely. May not develop ideas well. May contain significant number of mechanical errors. Language use often inadequate (clarity often a problem).
1	Shows lack of overall structure. Paragraph sense lacking. Especially weak language use. Fails to address the question (assignment). Obscures communication.

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EXPLANATION OF GRADING CHARACTERISTICS

I. STRUCTURE

Does the paper address the essay topic?
Does it drift?
Is the approach oblique?

Does the paper have a clear plan?
Does it ramble?

Does the paper clearly respond to the key words--(e.g., *state*, *explain*, or *describe*)?

II. PARAGRAPHING

Does the paper show a solid sense of paragraphing?

Are the paragraphs well developed?
Is there adequate support for paragraph topics?

III. LANGUAGE USE

Does the paper demonstrate adequate facility in English expression?
Is the word choice consistently appropriate?
Do diction and sentence structure contribute to clarity?
Does the paper show reasonable variety in sentence structure and control of the principles of subordination?
Does the paper avoid wordiness?

Does the paper maintain consistent tone?

IV. MECHANICS AND USAGE

Is the paper relatively free of punctuation faults?
(Especially note sentence fragments, run-on sentences, and comma splices.)

Is the paper relatively free of common usage errors?
(Especially note dangling and misplaced modifiers, lack of pronoun referent, pronoun agreement, subject-verb agreement, shifts in verb tense, etc.)

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SAMPLE STUDENT PAPERS

Score

1 The Air Force taught me about responsible which will last me from now to until. I came in at the age of seventeen went I really didn't have a sense of responsible. Then the years of training and come into work forty hour a week which became part of my Life. What I really saying "Know" I like working it Keep me busy in many ways. Went I first came in the Air Force I use to come in Late and Really didn't care. My superviser told me if I don't straight up I will be put out the service. Well, I straight up and now I'm enjoying the Air Force.

2 Working at the same company for five years, with four different bosses. I have learn, one thing. That they all feel that the employees should all was agree with thier decision. Wrong or right, because they are the boss. A good example, just the other day my current boss, said that he does not see me ever becomming a supervisor. Because I don't support management. I appears that manager do not feel that the people who work for them have a brain of thier own. I personally feel if a person have something to say, he or she should be allow to voice thier opion witout fear of Managerment viewing it as not being supportive of Management.

3 To me and my parents, school is the most important way to start a fulfilling career. It took me alot of convincing from my parents to make me believe that.

First of all my parents would always pressure me into doing my homework everynight so that my study habits would be good. I dreaded doing my homework but always tried.

Secondly my parents always pressured me on attendance to all my classes. They would always check up on my attendance and mark me if I didn't attend.

Score

3 (continued)

Now I am attending colledge and my study habits are well over par and my attendance is 100%. I am grateful to my parents for showing me the right way on this subject because school is a little eaisier on me and I feel that I will succeed.

4 The first time I got inside an internal combustion engine, I created my own disaster. I went into my first project all thumbs and with no knowledge of the engines inner workings. Within a few hours I had created such a pile of rubble, I made the decision that never again would I work on any type of engine, and went crying to my big brother.

Shortyly after my first catastrophe I aquired a semi-assembled motorcycle that didn't run. With an intense desire to have an operable motorcycle and a true desire to learn the secrets of the inner circle of motorcycles engine I prepared myself. Armed with a shop manuel, and some very simple but ever so helpful advice, from my ever so supportive if unwilling to do the work for me, big brother John.

With two aces in my corner I went at it. After my first failure John told me much to my dismay, "The simplest part of a motor cycle is the engine. Put it together just the opposite of the way you took it apart, while replacing defective parts, and it will run."

All my life I wanted a brother that would fight my battles. When I finally got that motorcycle running, and heard John brag to a friend of his that I did it all by myself, I was not only glad that I had a brother who made me fend for myself, but that I finnaly stepped into the inner circle.

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Score

5 Nevada. Barren, **desolate,** and flat--these words come to mind when I think of Nevada. Nevada is a place where towns are few and far between. The highways and byways are not well traveled. They are, however, flat and straight. Our legislation passed a bill fairly recently that states that all highways must have a 55 mph speed limit. I think this is a little unrealistic.

The drive between, say, Winnemucca and Reno is as follows: a flat, straight highway with miles upon miles of nothing but sagebrush and an occasional lizard; once in a while another car will pass by, probably lost and on the wrong road. In the summer it is unbearably hot and in the winter just as cold. I ask this--is it necessary or realistic to travel 60 mph or 65 mph for hours or would it be better and just as safe to go 70 mph, 75 mph, or even 80 mph for about two and a half hours? I tend to agree with the later and for two reasons.

First, the roads are so deserted that there is not much danger of collision. Granted that there are some roads where a 55 mph speed limit is a matter of survival, but most highways in Nevada are not crowded and busy.

Second, most accidents on Nevada highways are from people falling asleep at the wheel and driving off the road. I can't blame them! There is absolutely nothing at all to stay awake for. There is no panoramic scenery, nor is there the constant threat of collision with another car. About the only thing out there that will pose any threat **will be a stray** cow wandering out onto the road.

I feel that some highways should and must remain at 55 mph, but there are also some which should **be reconsidered. Afterall,** a 55 mph speed limit between Reno and Winemucca is just asking to be defied.

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Score

6

The Grehound Bus Lines, in their attempt to please all their travelling customers, have a regulation applying to most routes which allows for smoking in the back rows of the bus only. While I appreciate their effort, I do not feel the actual result beneficial to all passengers.

A Greyhound bus affords fairly tight living space for its passengers. This is not a criticism, just a fact. I ride the bus often and greatly appreciate the convenience it offers. As a non-smoker, I try to sit in the front rows of the bus. This is not always possible. Sometimes, due to crowded conditions, I have sat in the back rows. Fortunately, I am not greatly bothered by cigarette smoke and have only my smoke-odored clothes to attend with at the end of the ride. But I do know of people who are allergic to cigarette smoke and, unless they live in San Francisco or Los Angeles where smoking is not allowed on city buses, must refrain from the use of this service.

Normally, I have few qualms about cigarette smoking. More and more restaurants are dividing their seating space into smoking and non-smoking sections, which allows everyone the freedom of their own choice. Restaurants usually provide adequate ventilation to eliminate the smoke before it diffuses to non-smoking areas. But, as I mentioned, buses are tightly compacted. During the summer months, when the air conditioning is operable, most smoke created in the smoking area is eliminated very quickly. The winter months create the problem. With heaters running and all windows closed, the smoke circulates through the air up to the front rows. I appreciate smokers' rights as well as non-smokers, and therefore feel the responsibility falls on the buslines. If they wish to continue with the "back rows for smokers" regulation, they must provide better means of eliminating the smoke. During the winter months, the smoke must be removed from the air before incoming heat enters. I am sure this would please the smokers as well.

I do feel smoking regulations on buses are fair and necessary. But under present circumstances, the regulations do appear unrealistic. Non-smokers are not being protected by the current rules. If more proper ventilation cannot be supplied, I see the only other choice as not allowing smoking under any circumstances on the buses. Even on cross country trips the buses make regular scheduled stops. At these stops, smokers could exit the bus before lighting their cigarettes. I feel there are presently more non-smokers being discriminated against than smokers, and regulations need to be changed to correct the situation. The airlines have dealt with this well, and perhaps could lend their suggestions to the Greyhound Bus Lines.

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ATTACHMENT II

HOLISTIC READING CRITERIA FOR STUDENT PAPERS

Checklist

		Yes	No
A Paper	An exemplary paper		
	I. Organization		
	A. Clear statement of all main points or ideas.....	___	___
	B. Supporting details cover all pertinent points.....	___	___
	C. Supporting details correct.....	___	___
	D. Supporting details arranged in logical order.....	___	___
	II. Content		
	A. Answers the question thoroughly and with insight.....	___	___
	B. Demonstrates clear understanding of material.....	___	___
	III. Mechanics (spelling, grammar, punctuation)		
	A. Only a few minor errors which do not interfere with communication..	___	___
B Paper	A very good paper		
	I. Organization		
	A. Clear statement of all or most of the main points.....	___	___
	B. Supporting details cover most of the pertinent points.....	___	___
	C. Supporting details correct.....	___	___
	D. Supporting details arranged in logical order.....	___	___
	II. Content		
	A. Answers the question with sufficient thoroughness.....	___	___
	B. Demonstrates good understanding of material.....	___	___
	III. Mechanics		
	A. May have some errors, but most do not interfere with meaning.....	___	___

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Holistic Reading Criteria For Student Papers--Checklist (continued)

C Paper A Satisfactory paper

	Yes	No
I. Organization		
A. Clear statement of some of the main points.....	___	___
B. Supporting details weak, either in number or development.....	___	___
C. Supporting details mostly correct.....	___	___
D. Arrangement jumbled, confused, or shows lack of planning.....	___	___
II. Content		
A. Does not answer all parts of the question, but does cover the most important points.....	___	___
B. Shows some lack of understanding...	___	___
C. Lack of clarity.....	___	___
III. Mechanics		
A. Several errors; some interfere with communication (confused word choice, fragments, pronoun or verb errors, etc.).....	___	___
B. Some lack of facility in use of language.....	___	___

D Paper A Poor paper

I. Organization		
A. Digresses from or does not state main point.....	___	___
B. Few or insufficient supporting details.....	___	___
C. Most supporting details incorrect.	___	___
D. Confused, jumbled arrangement of supporting details.....	___	___
II. Content		
A. Some facts and information, but does not answer most parts of the question.....	___	___
B. Shows very little understanding and lacks clarity.....	___	___
III. Mechanics		
A. Many errors which interfere with communication.....	___	___
B. Significant lack of facility in use of language.....	___	___

Holistic Reading Criteria For Student Papers--Checklist (continued)

F Paper An Unsatisfactory paper

		Yes	No
I.	Organization		
	A. Shows general confusion and omits main point.....	___	___
	B. No supporting details or inadequate number of details.....	___	___
	C. Supporting details incorrect.....	___	___
	D. Confused arrangement of ideas and details.....	___	___
II.	Content		
	A. Few if any discernible facts or details.....	___	___
	B. General lack of understanding.....	___	___
III.	Mechanics		
	A. Excessive number of errors which interfere with meaning.....	___	___
	B. Language use especially weak and confusing.....	___	___

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